



They looked for a City
Which hath foundations
Whose builder and Maker
is God. Heb 11:10

By Faith Noah being
warned of God of
Things not seen as yet
prepared an Ark to
save his house
from the Flood. 1 Pet 1:6-7

And the same Jesus shall so
come in like manner
as ye have seen him
go into heaven.
Acts 1:11

Therefore they that
were scattered
abroad went everywhere
preaching the
Word. Acts 8:4

The City had no need
of the Sun, neither of
the Moon, for the glory
of God did
lighten it. Rev 21:23

While the
Bridegroom tarried
they all slumbered
and slept.
Matt 25:5

At midnight there
was a cry made.
Behold the
bridegroom
cometh.
Matt 25:6

Jesus came into Galilee
preaching the gospel
of the Kingdom
of God.
Mark 1:14

That Overcometh Shall Inherit All Things. Rev 21:7

The Megiddo Message

Devoted to the Cause of Christ

The Holy City John Saw in Vision

THE GIFT

HOLD ON, HOLD IN, HOLD OUT

DID JOSHUA STOP THE SUN AND MOON?

MUSINGS OF THE EDITOR

MEDITATIONS ON THE WORD

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

THE CITY OF GOD

Vol. 42, No. 26

December 17, 1955

The Megiddo Message

December 17, 1955 Vol. 42, No. 26

Percy J. Thatcher, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone, THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

- Strengthen your faith in the Bible
- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding: for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. . . . Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life."

—Proverbs 3: 13, 14; 4: 13.

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Letters

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Dear Sister:

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Detroit, Mich.

L. W.

Letters Cheer and Strengthen

Dear Sister:

I do enjoy all the letters from Megiddo because they are so full of good news which cheers me up and strengthens me too. . . . The truth, God's Word, is able to strengthen us. But it is obedience to that truth which opens the door to strength. Every time we say "no" to a temptation it will make us stronger. Our strength will be small at first, but it will grow and multiply when we obey: "Do all to the glory of God. . . . Set your affection on things above. . . . Bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Obedience is the main thing.

LaFeria, Texas

J. D.

Megiddo Publications a Help in Understanding the Bible

Dear Christian Friends:

Were it not for your publications, where would we turn to receive the wondrous words of wisdom? Of course we have the Bible, from which you are teaching, but we would not be able to understand it in all of its meaning without the teachers you have in your church.

Kansas City, Mo.

J. E.

From One Girl to Another

Dear Ruth:

We had a happy time with you on Sunday, and just wish we could come this week. Well, it won't be long before our December holiday, and Joy and I plan to spend it at Megiddo. I enjoyed Bible Class even though the class was very small last Sunday. The lesson of Paul on his voyage to Rome was very interesting. Last night I read about it again.

He did not let anything bother him; all he thought about was preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom.

I am reading Paul by Goodspeed. I think it is a lovely book.

Many thanks for your kindness to all of us.

Fruitland, Ontario

S. H.

OBITUARY

EDWARD L. PHILLIPS

Edward L. Phillips, of Water Valley, Miss., a reader of THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE since 1931, fell asleep in death on Nov. 16, 1955. To his wife and those who mourn we extend our deepest sympathy.

The Holy City John Saw in Vision

(Revelation 21)

IT WAS WHEN JOHN, the beloved of the Lord, was exiled on the Isle of Patmos, more than a quarter of a century after those three years of intimate and holy companionship with his Master, that he received the supreme token of his Master's esteem; for it was of him that Jesus made choice to record His last message to mankind.

And that message which John faithfully set down opens with the words: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (Rev. 1:1).

Strangely, in the face of such an introduction as this, which designates the last book of the Bible as a **REVELATION**—*that which reveals*—common men and great ecclesiastics alike shake their heads and declare unani- mously that the book is, for the most part, an unfathom- able mystery. Commentators have speculated endlessly upon its possible meaning, only to arrive at an endless variety of doubtful solutions.

But to the "servants" of God, those for whom the book was expressly written, **REVELATION** is not enshrouded in mystery. It is what its name states it to be—a glorious **REVELATION**.

When Jesus Christ delivered that **REVELATION** to John, He, figuratively speaking, turned another glowing torch- light upon God's wondrous plan of salvation for this earth, focusing that light directly upon the grand Mil- lennial Age. And what a wealth of detail this **REVELATION** brings to view when our minds become unscrambled of man's conjectures and we delve down into the Scriptural elucidation of this book!

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The 21st chapter of Revelation describes a city coming down from Heaven—not a literal city, but a symbolical city, representative of the bride of Christ, her char- acter all polished, dazzling, pure.

A New Heaven and a New Earth

John begins this chapter by saying, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away."

Our first thought when we talk about heaven, is the heaven above, the wonderful planets and the stars that circle in the vast immensity of space. But these are un- changeable, a part of Eternity itself. John's vision could not have concerned the natural heavens.

So we turn to the Scriptures themselves for a solution. There we find the ruling powers of earth oftentimes re- ferred to as "heavens," and the people over whom they rule, as the "earth."

In Isa. 1:1, 2, 10 we read, "The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jeru-

salem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. . . . Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah." The Prophet addresses the kings of Judah and the people of Jerusalem and says, "*Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth.*"

The Apostle Peter employs the same figure of speech. In II Peter 3:5—13 he describes three distinct "heavens and earth," the first of which perished at the time of the Flood, the second of which reaches to the Day of Judg- ment, at which time the third heaven and earth, the same that John beheld in vision, shall be inaugurated.

It was not the literal heavens and earth, but that gen- eration of wicked men and women which perished in the flood (vs. 5, 6). Likewise, it is not the literal heavens and earth that are "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (v. 7). Nor is it literal fire that shall consume them. In the Bible, "fire" is often used as "a symbol of destruction, whether of men or of things." It is figurative of the judgments of God. "To be destroyed by war is said to be destroyed by fire."

The Revelation of Jesus Christ tells us that the present political and ecclesiastical heavens, when they see that their power is to be crushed, that they are to be brought low, will join their forces and go out to make war against Christ—hence the "great noise" which Peter describes with their passing. We read in Rev. 19:19, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." And in Rev. 17:14 we are told, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them."

It is in the Revelation of Jesus Christ that we also find who are to make up the new heavens or rulers of that world to come:

We read in Rev. 3:21, "*To him that overcometh* will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also over- came, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

In Rev. 14:1, 4, the number who will be overcomers is revealed to us: "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. . . . These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

What lovely characteristics these new heavens will possess! And what a transformation shall take place upon the earth because of them! Peter says, "We . . . look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteous- ness" (II Pet. 3:13). Isaiah says (60:17—21), "I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. . . . Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for

ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

As righteous laws issue from the new heavens, distilling like the dew and the rain upon the parched land, a new and better class of people shall spring forth upon the earth.

The Holy City

In Rev. 21:2 we read, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

Some of the churches have developed very definite ideas concerning this city. One denomination claims that it is literal. And yet they say that through the midst of it runs the river of life—a spiritual river in a literal city! In their current issue of *These Times* the Adventists give definite dimensions to the holy city:

The perimeter of the New Jerusalem is 12,000 *stadia* (according to the Greek text), or nearly 1,600 miles. A street running straight across the city is nearly 400 miles long! Within the bounds of the urban area of 160,000 square miles could be placed many a city the size of London or New York. The wall is 144 cubits high. If the common cubit of about 18 inches is meant, its height rises to more than 200 feet!

They say that "beyond the farthest constellations and the reach of all telescopes" lies such a city, and that at His Second Advent Christ will take His followers there, to reign with Him a thousand years. In the meantime, the earth is to be burned up and left in a desolate condition, with only the Devil to roam about alone among the charred bones and ashes! At the end of the thousand years, they say, the city shall descend from Heaven, the faithful will move in and the Devil be destroyed.

But this is inconsistent with the very plainest teachings of Scripture.

Instead of this earth remaining a desolate wilderness for a thousand years, the Wise Man says, "The righteous shall never be removed; but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth" (Prov. 10:30).

Nor are the saints going to Heaven to reign with Christ. In John 14:3 Christ said, "*I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*" The redeemed sing, "Thou . . . hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and *we shall reign on the earth*" (Rev. 5:9, 10).

Nor was that city John saw descending from Heaven a literal city. He describes it as being "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." In Rev. 21:9 he tells us again, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels . . . and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."

This city is the bride, the Lamb's wife, composed of all the faithful, and she is clothed in righteousness. We read in Rev. 19:7, 8, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

Also in Isa. 60:14 are the faithful called a city: "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending

unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The City of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

Jesus said in Matt. 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

The same beautiful comparison is made again in Isa. 26:1, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." This spiritual city, this bride of Christ, will be surrounded with walls of salvation!

The Bible does speak of a literal city as well as a spiritual one. The New Jerusalem, a literal city, is to be the capital of the earth and the fountainhead of Truth (Matt. 5:34, 35; Zech. 2:10—12; 14:8, 16). And it is the spiritual city, Christ and His bride, who will establish the literal city.

Why is This City Said to Come Down From Heaven?

Seeing that the faithful do not go to Heaven, but remain on the earth, some may ask how it was that John beheld this city "coming down from God out of heaven."

In I Thess. 4:16, 17 Paul tells us, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

The Resurrection will first take place; then the living and the resurrected ones shall ascend to meet the Lord in the air.

In Zech. 14:4, 5, we are told about their coming down. The Prophet is speaking of Christ's returning. He says, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley. . . . And the Lord my God [Christ, *Emmanuel* 'which being interpreted is, God with us'—Matt. 1:23] shall come, and all the saints with thee."

As John beheld that wonderful vision of Christ and His bride descending from the skies, he heard a voice out of Heaven saying, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God [*Emmanuel*—Christ] himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:3).

"The Wall of the City Had Twelve Foundations"

In Rev. 21:12—14 John tells us the city "had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and the names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

A literal city in Heaven would have no need for walls. But this city is spiritual, and there is wonderful significance to those walls. Isaiah says, "Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks" (ch. 26:1).

Christ revealed to John that those walls would have twelve foundations, bearing the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. Various churches claim a succession of Apostles. But in this vision which John beheld, false claimants have no place; they are left out completely, leaving the man-made theory of a succession of Apostles without a foundation!

"The City Lieth Foursquare . . .

"... And the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal" (v. 16). The city measures perfectly all around—nothing crooked about it, and it is the same on all sides.

This fits the specification of Ezek. 43:12, "This is the law of the house: Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the house." This spiritual city which John beheld has complied with "the law of the house," it is "*most holy, perfect on all sides.*"

John also describes the walls as being "a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel" (Rev. 21:17). One hundred forty-four thousand is the number of the faithful who stand with Christ on Mount Zion (Rev. 14:1), further proving that this city is composed of all the faithful—the one new man, formed out of Jew and Gentile, of which Christ is the Head (Eph. 4:13, 15, 16).

Walls of Jasper . . . Streets of Gold

John writes, "And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones" (vs. 18, 19).

There is significance to the meaning of the word "jasper" in the original, which is, "*a perfect stone.*" By means of such lovely comparisons the Lord describes the perfection of this city.

There are many people who will declare that no one can become perfect. But Jesus tells us in Matt. 5:48, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

In Rev. 14:5 there is more evidence of the perfection of the saints who make up that city: "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."

Again and again the Lord seeks to impress upon our minds that only those who form pure and holy characters can enter into the composition of this wonderful city.

The city is further described as being of "pure gold, like unto clear glass." In the Greek, "gold" has for one of its definitions, "my golden one." Other definitions are, "my little treasure," and "His dear ones." This city is His "little treasure." Why is it a *little* treasure? Jesus says in Matt. 7:13, 14, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: be-

cause strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Few will walk in this narrow way and turn neither to the right hand nor to the left; few will, as Peter implores (1 Pet. 2:1, 2), lay "aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings," and "as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." But of those who thus do, he says, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (v. 5).

There Shall Be No Night There

The Revelator tells us, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there" (Rev. 21:23—25).

That city will radiate physical as well as spiritual light.

We read in Dan. 12:3, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." No wonder Paul speaks of going "from glory to glory" (II Cor. 3:18)! There shall be no limit, no end to that glory.

When we consider the wondrous display of immortal glory that was manifested at the time of Jesus' birth, when myriads of angels appeared to the shepherds and sang of peace on earth (Luke 2:13, 14); and of Jesus' transfiguration, when "his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (Matt. 17:1, 2); and of the angel who at the time of Jesus' resurrection "descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow" (Matt. 28:2—4), then we can understand how that city shall have "no need of the sun, neither of the moon."

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Soon this glorious city shall be established. What a wonderful time that will be when "the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it" (Rev. 21:24)!

Instead of the earth being left a desolate wilderness for a thousand years, the everlasting gospel shall be preached to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people (Rev. 14:6; Isa. 66:19)! Who would not long to be a part of that spiritual city that will dispense the blessings of salvation to the nations in that golden age to come. But to be among that number we must put on the robe of righteousness, the "fine linen clean and white."

Every aspect of this wonderful vision which John beheld testifies to the purity of that spiritual city, as do the closing words to the chapter, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

The Gift

JANICE NELSON, weary and worried, stood at a counter in Murray's, a large department store in a big, mid-western city. The Christmas Club money had all been spent. Norbert had said, "No more gifts on credit," and still there was Nancy Freeman's present to get, besides the Harris children's and something for Thelma and Kay. Each one was a *must* because they had remembered her, or Ellen Sue, last year and probably would again this year, but how to manage it all. . . . If her mother would keep Ellen Sue, she could probably do bookkeeping at Lanley's for a week. They needed extra bookkeepers, Claire told her. That would help, but all the things she had to do at home yet and this was the 3d, she sighed—Three more weeks! "It's terrific!" she thought vehemently, "but everybody does it." Just then, Ellen Sue was pulling on her arm. "There's Santie again, Mommy—over there!" looking through the arch. "Let's go see him, Mommy, please!" With both feet stamping, the "please" was quite demanding. Ellen Sue was leading the way.

"How come that Santie does not always look the same, Mommy? That first one we saw was taller than Daddy, and the other one's nose was so funny, and this one is a fatty, like in my picture book. Are there lots of Santie's, Mommy? Which one is the reg'lar one that comes down the chimney?" The man was looking toward Ellen Sue as they approached. "Are you the Santie Claus that is goin' to send my presents? You have funny whiskers. Are you *my* Santie? Does everybody have a different Santie?" At that, the man all dressed in red, bent over to shake Ellen Sue's hand, but he quickly had to put up the other hand, for he was nearly losing his false face and that made Ellen Sue laugh and—wonder. But he was quite quick to ask her what she would like for her tree. Right by them were some toy electric ranges which were advertised to really cook, which, with several gadgets and supplies, were priced at \$10.98!

"Oh-h Mommy! This is just like our big stove at home—This is what I want, Santie. A nice stove and everything on this table." Janice groaned inwardly as Santa took a card and put Ellen Sue's name on it and faithfully promised to deliver it Christmas morning. Ellen Sue wouldn't forget, Janice knew, and what should she do? Eleven dollars! when they had already bought more toys than they could afford.

She had one more errand to do—to see some needle work at the art counter on the eighth floor. She was relieved to find it less crowded than many departments. As she deliberated over some imported doilies, a rather modest-appearing young woman standing near by was accosted by another customer. "Oh, hello, Mrs. Peterson. Never expected to see you in town today. I must tell you how we are enjoying those raspberries that we got from you folks last summer. They are just grand frozen," as she rested a yellow-gloved hand on Mrs.

Peterson's arm. "You're doing your Christmas shopping, too? Wonderful Christmas weather, isn't it? snow and all. Don't you love it?" she bubbled.

"Well, as for the weather," Mrs. Peterson answered quietly, "it will do very well for winter and December but it's quite the wrong season for Christ's birthday."

"Oh-h?" returned the vivacious one, surprised. "What do you mean? Don't you think Sunday, December 25th, is Christmas and Christ's birthday? I thought *everybody* believed that."

"Not quite," was Mrs. Peterson's reply. Just then, the clerk stepped up to help Mrs. Peterson—and the conversation was interrupted—who, when her purchase was completed, spoke to her friend, "I would like to give you a small leaflet which states some enlightening facts concerning the traditional December 25th observance of Christmas. Would you mind?" as she took a small tract from her purse. "I think you would enjoy the reading."

"Thank you!" answered the vivacious one, quite mechanically. "I'll be seeing you next summer at berry time. Bye now!" she added gaily.

"Good-bye" said Mrs. Peterson, and "I hope you read the leaflet." She smiled and disappeared toward the escalator. Her friend viewed the leaflet with utter dismay. "I'll never be interested in anything like that!" she exclaimed, half to herself and half to Janice, as she happened to be looking her way. "Wouldn't you like it?" she said, almost thrusting it into her hand.

"Thanks," said Janice. "I might. I was a little interested in her conversation."

On the cover of it she read, "Reasons Why Members of the Megiddo Mission Observe True Christmas in the Spring." "In the spring! Something brand new," Janice thought, and put the folder into her handbag.

"What's that, Mommy, can I see?" Ellen Sue was pulling on her coat sleeve.

"Nothing for you, dear. The lady just gave Mommy something to read."

Out on the street again, on their way to the bus Janice was impressed with the crowds of people, mostly shoppers with laden arms, scurrying, rushing, jostling, pushing along the windy street. "Where is the pretty music, Mommy?" inquired Ellen Sue, trudging along as fast as she could through the dense crowd.

"It's coming from the Religious Book Store across the street, Honey." The familiar air of *The First Noel*, ringing out over the snowy air, brought the equally familiar words to Janice's mind.

"The first Noel, the angels did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields
as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their
sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so
deep."

"Oh-h-h-h! I h-hope it was warmer than this," shivered Janice as an icy wind whipped up the avenue. "I wonder," remembering the small tract in her handbag, "if it *might* have been spring—it would be a much nicer time to celebrate."

During the evening meal, at which her family gathered with gratifying satisfaction and hearty appetites, Janice told of her day's pursuits and of the incident at the art counter. There were her husband, Norbert Nelson, the twins, Herbert and Helen of high school age, Ellen Sue, and herself. "Say, Dad," said Helen, as she reached for another cornmeal muffin, "haven't heard anything about the office party this year."

"There's to be none," said her father. "This office has had its last party," was the boss's reply when the girls inquired. And the president added, "The office Christmas party has become something that everyone anticipates with dread, suffers through, and remembers with horror. Not on your life are we repeating it." Remember, I told you last year, how it got to be such a brawl that the janitors had to break it up along toward morning. I wasn't there, I did not get back from Chicago in time, but some of the boys said it got pretty bad."

"That's rather a stigma on a Christian celebration, isn't it?" Janice enjoined.

"Well, the fact is, it really isn't a Christian celebration any more," Norbert went on. "I saw an article at the club at noon today, that what we celebrate now is *Christmas—in general* so as to accommodate Christians and non-Christians. 'Christmas as we keep it today,' the article stated, 'is as general as possible.' I believe the sheet is in my overcoat pocket. Would you get it please, Herb?"

"Yes. Here it is," as the youth handed his father a folded magazine.

"It goes on to say that 'as far as the public celebration of Christmas is concerned, the specifically Christian elements of the season are soft-pedaled in favor of some strong, non-controversial note on which all voices can agree.' All this means that by so doing, everyone—Jew, Christian, Mohammedan, theist, humanist, atheist—can agree on the celebration. After all, the celebrants would be relatively few if limited to those who rejoiced at the birthday of our Lord. The celebrants are many, however, because Christmas is no longer limited to those who worship a newborn King."

"Well, somehow I thought more about it today. The gift-giving actually seems more of a burden than it should for a Christian festival. Perhaps it was the serenity of the young Mrs. Peterson whose little tract suggests she celebrates a different kind of Christmas as well as at a different time," observed Janice.

"Let's see that tract—who ever heard of celebrating Christmas in the spring?" said Norbert. "I knew the Greeks have a different new year, and the Jews, too, but this sounds like a new thing entirely."

"Here it is," as Janice took it from her

handbag. "It's published by the Megiddo Mission of Rochester, N. Y."

"Some new sect sprung up in New York," was Norbert's remark as he took the small, neatly printed leaflet, from his wife. "They have a lot of them in the East." Norbert thumbed the leaflet through to a title "Significance of December 25," where he read the following:

The Roman Saturnalia—among the vilest feasts, an occasion of riotous and dissolute merrymaking when the customary restraints of law and morality were thrown aside—was held in December. It was here that the Church placed the birth of Christ.

December 25th was also the time of the heathen celebration of the winter solstice.

The reason why the fathers transferred the celebration of Christmas to the 25th of December was this: It was the custom of the heathen to celebrate on the same 25th of December the birthday of the Sun. . . . Accordingly when the doctors of the Church perceived that the Christians had a leaning to this festival, they took counsel and resolved that the true Nativity should be solemnized on that day.

Originally the Romans began their year with March, which gave the true value to the months named from the Latin numerals: September from *septem* (seven), October from *octo* (eight), November from *novem* (nine), and December from *decem* (ten). With the change of time, their numerical value is no more significant.

Christmas has not only become Christless; it has grown into that economic frenzy, the Christmas trade.

His eyes fairly bulged. Turning back a page or two, he read, "Christ was born in the Spring," and the reading of the first paragraph sent him to the kitchen where the dishwashing was going on.

"Say, Janice, this is the most informative thing on Christmas I ever saw or heard of. Do you know we have a week that is neither last year, this year, nor next year? Listen to this:"

Christmas and New Year's Day necessarily fall on the same day because Christ's birth stands between B. C. and A. D. (This week between December 25th and January 1st is neither B. C. nor A. D.)

"Never thought a thing about it; but it is the very truth. Perhaps we're due for more education on the subject," was Janice' comment.

Norbert continued:

The month and day of the birth of Christ . . . could not at all events have fallen in December or January, since at this time of the year the flocks are not found in the open fields. . . . Moreover a census, which made traveling necessary, would not have been or-

dered at this season. —*McClintock & Strong's Ency.*

Hippolytus, a great scholar living at the close of the second century, had these words engraven upon his monument: *I say that Jesus Christ was born April 2.*

This monument as evidence is now preserved in the Lateran Museum at Rome.

John the Baptist, who was six months Christ's senior, was born in the autumn, proving Christ's birth to have been in the spring.

—*Ency. Britannica.*

"My! I shall be glad when I can get a chance to read it. Be sure and put it where I can find it. I don't know when it will be, but I surely want to read it."

Discussion and preparation went on abreast in the Nelson household. Interest, with tension, mounted steadily, until the eventful hours of the evening of December 24th. The beautiful tree Dad had earlier brought home was the center of controversy. Janice hadn't wanted one; the twins had. Everybody argued; the twins won. To cap the climax, Janice knew what everyone else had forgotten—that the old trimmings had been thrown out at spring housecleaning, with the expectation of buying new ones. None had been bought. There were tears, tempers, turmoil.

"What are we going to do, Dad?" Helen asked petulantly.

"Let's take the thing out and burn it," was his terse reply. "None of us will enjoy it after all this."

"We'd burn it in a couple of weeks anyway," added philosophical Herbert.

And so the Nelson's Christmas tree made a beautiful bonfire. The family gazed in silence as on a funeral pyre.

December 26 dawned bright and clear, a beautiful December day. Snow laden lawns, shrubs and trees glistened in the sunlight like so many acres of diamonds.

"Well, the Nelsons are certainly going to investigate this Christmas business, aren't we, Janice?" was Mr. Nelson's conclusion, laying down the by-this-time-much-worn leaflet.

"I will write today to the Megiddo Mission and see who and what they are. Yesterday I certainly enjoyed myself less than I ever did before. All the strain, stress and money spent for the wrong date is a mistake that we don't care to continue, if it is a mistake—and the more you think about it, the more it seems that it is."

Off to Rochester, N. Y., went the inquiry for further facts and back the facts came, manyfold.

There was a pamphlet in which there were pages of historical evidence from Mosheim, D'Aubigne, Dawson, Wells, Sir George Frazer, The Ency. Brit., etc., proving the heathen origin of December 25. One pointed paragraph from the "Golden Bough" by Frazer, stated expressly, "Christmas is nothing but an old heathen celebration of the winter solstice!"

That the present-day celebration bears

close resemblance to the ancient heathen Saturnalia of Pagan Rome in several respects, struck both Norbert and Janice Nelson with awe and disgust—and a determination to withdraw. The evidence was too overwhelming to attempt to refute. There was a direct command from the Book, to "learn not the ways of the heathen" (Jer. 10: 1—4). That was a jolt. They had professed to be Christians.

The year was an eventful one for the Norbert Nelson family. Along with the tradition of Christmas they learned that many other fundamental doctrines of the nominal church were without Scriptural foundation or reason, much to their surprise and chagrin. Their eyes were opened on one subject after another as the flood of Scriptural evidence confirmed each new point of doctrine. It was all so revolutionary and reasonable. The year proved to be one of decision, and the turning point of their lives.

The next December found the family calm and serene with a fixed purpose and a high aim as the anniversary of their new life and the traditional Christmas approached. They addressed several dozen envelopes to relatives, friends, teachers, and associates, each containing a facsimile of the little tract that opened the door to a new life for them.

As Janice wrote to a personal friend of long standing, who had formerly received one of her choicest gifts, "I can think of nothing more precious to send you, dear Phyllis, than this golden key to a higher, better, fuller life. . . ."

"The great wrong in the December 25 festivity is attaching Christ's name to the pagan manner of the celebration and on the date of what is acknowledged by reliable historians to be one of the vilest, if not the vilest of the pagan festivals—that of the Saturnalia Feast. To proclaim a season of good cheer, etc., simply as such, at this season would be one thing but to profess to honor the Son of God at such a time, in such a manner, is ignominy in the extreme.

"If Jesus denounced the money changers in the temple, in His day, what would He say of the grossly commercialized business that brands the season as by far the most profitable of the year *financially*?"

"The center of attraction is predominantly and pre-eminently Santa Claus, whose origin is strictly pagan and in no way related to Christ or true Christianity. Hence we, like the early Christians, refuse to lay one grain of incense on the heathen altars."

NOTICE

Subscribers who wish to present the Christmas evidence to their friends at this season can secure help by sending for copies of tracts which give reasons why true Christmas comes in the spring.

Hold on, Hold in, Hold out

THERE are dark hours that mark the history of the brightest years. Trials come in a thousand different forms. They come with the warm throbbing of youthful lives, keep pace with the measured tread of manhood's noon, and depart not from the descending footsteps of age.

It is human nature to look upon only the bright and cheery scenes of life, to forget its trials and storms in the light of the present. But let us not forget that there will come other moments when we must dispel the gloom of despondency and say to a fainting heart, Hold on! Hold on! There is a way out and I am going to find it. Hold on, for no task ahead of me is as great as the power behind me. Hold on, for when God is going to do something wonderful for me He begins with a difficulty; and if it is going to be something very wonderful He begins with what I have called an impossibility. He is keeping His choicest cordials for my deepest faintings. So, hold on, my soul, hold on! And like Jacob of old, when he struggled with the angel, say, "I will not let you go until you bless me."

When we struggle with a difficulty, instead of petitioning the Father for a speedy deliverance, we should ask Him not to let it depart from us without imparting the blessing it was intended to bestow, lest we say, "Behold, the Lord was in this place and I knew it not."

There is no virtue in being pure because there is no cloud; calm because there is no wind; honest because there is no temptation; loyal because there is no danger.

A Christian uses everything as grist to his mill. "What does he know," said a sage, "who has not suffered?" We need trials and temptations to give us strength and depth, to calm and mellow us.

We are going to stumble, we are going to fall, but let us, like Cæsar when he stumbled on shore, stumble forward. Mistakes can be lessons of wisdom. To be sorry for faults or failures is not enough; there must be increasing effort to rise up out of "what I am to what I should be."

Hold on, then, and go forward; there simply is no future in continually digging into the past.

With God on his side a man is mightier than circumstances, mightier than any disorder or injustice that can appear in his affairs or in his environment. He is not a victim of circumstances or the pawn of fate.

Hold in, my soul, hold in the strong impulses, the powerful passions. Hold in and keep silent the voice of vehement desire.

Hold in the angry words, for it is only in the bosom of fools that anger rises like a boiling foam, giving the tongue its sting and venom, "full of deadly poison," says the Apostle James. Perhaps someone is exceedingly rude and unreasonable; still hold in and be calm, say nothing. An enemy can answer everything you can possibly say, can retaliate against everything you can possibly do, except one thing—that is silence.

Such defense is more effective than blows; nothing so disarms attack as for you to go about your business as usual. Kindness can be the most exasperating vengeance. Treat an enemy as generously as you treat a friend, and it may end in your having two friends and no enemy.

Hold in the murmurings that so easily pass the lips. Blessings are numberless; just try counting them and

you will find no time left in which to complain. No matter how heavy the cross may be, we can always find someone else with a heavier one. "I had no shoes, and complained," said one, "until I saw a man who had no feet."

We need to hold in this selfish spirit and think of others more and more, cultivating a *giving* rather than a *receiving* attitude, taking more responsibility and being more independent instead of dependent. Make it our aim not to be just as good but better than our word.

Hold in the light and foolish words and banish them from the mind. We often hear many seemingly harmless and humorous incidents and are tempted to retell them, but hold in, suppress that for the telling of which you see no good reason or purpose. Be careful what ideas you set loose in the world. Sometimes they snowball into something more serious than we had dreamed possible.

Let us become persons with whom it would seem impossible to come in contact without rubbing off something that is distinctly beneficial.

As we hold in and bridle the tongue we are well on our way to bridling the whole body. First, though, before we can hold in the tongue, we must hold in the practical words of Wisdom we hear from day to day. Care must be taken lest the water of life we absorb during seasons of prayer and meditation or spiritual refreshing become so diluted with what we see and hear during our working hours that it loses its cleansing power over our souls.

James 1:4 is a very practical and mighty little verse which we should hold in our minds. If we let patience have her perfect work each day, it will have immeasurable creative and constructive power. It is a verse we can hold in our minds and absorb of its juices continually.

Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice," is another very common verse we often hear repeated, but so seldom see put into practice. It was of such importance that Paul said it once, then repeated it. It is not difficult to live out when skies are clear and sunny, but we find it is a gigantic task when sorrow comes, or when health and fortunes fail; and many times we do not hold in the under lip when we are shown the greatest kindness of all, reproof. When our own skies are cloudy, be careful that we do not put a cloud in our brother's sky.

If we hold on to this life line and let no trials or temptations cause us to lose our first love, we will hold in the words of Wisdom and suppress our evil desires. By then we shall have realized the pit from whence we have been digged and, full of compassion for our fellow men, hold out the cup of cold water to others. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

We have received a great kindness; hold it out. There is plenty for everyone; all can drink their fill without diminishing the supply in any way. We are not like a small child I heard of recently who for the first time in its life was presented with a full cup of milk. She, who had always been used to sharing a cup with the whole family, looked up wistfully and asked, "How deep may I drink?" We know we must drink the entire cupful, all the

Truth both in doctrine and practice. There have been those who found it easier to hold out the cup for others to drink than to drink it all themselves. The great Apostle Paul feared lest when he had preached to others he himself should become a castaway. We are apt to complain about the limits life sets, but we are not so limited by circumstances as we are self-limited. We do not drink deep enough; we live with littleness when we could live with greatness. We reach out avidly after incidentals and fail to lay hold on essentials.

The best way to hold out this Truth is by our daily deportment. Let us remember that if we want our neighbor to know the wonderful things our religion will do for him, we must let him see what it has done for us. One life showing the way is worth ten tongues trying to tell it. Nor is our responsibility to hold out this Truth to be evaded on the grounds of our unimportance. The lowly spider can see many things which the majestic eagle overlooks. There will be ways and means by which each of us can hold out the Truth to others as no one else can.

Thus if we hold on, hold in, and hold out, the morning will break with a more glorious light because of the storms met and conquered in the night.

DID JOSHUA STOP THE SUN AND MOON?

IF the literal sun had stood still "about a whole day," not only would the Amorites have perished but also Joshua and the Israelites.

Read carefully the account in the 9th and 10th chapters of the book of Joshua, and you will learn that the Gibeonites deceived Joshua into making a league with them that they should be his servants, in misrepresenting that they had come from a long distance.

When the surrounding nations heard that the Gibeonites had submitted to Joshua, they assembled their armies and came against the city of Gibeon to destroy it and the inhabitants. And the men of Gibeon appealed to Joshua for help, so he went with his army to their deliverance.

In Joshua 10:2 we are told that when the different kings of that country heard that the Gibeonites had made peace with Israel, "they feared greatly, because Gibeon was a great city, as one of the royal cities."

The Hebrew Lexicon gives the definition of "royal" as: "dominion, rule, chief of rulers." This is why Gibeon was called a sun city; it was the chief city, the greatest of all.

In verse 12 we read: "Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon." Notice, Joshua addressed the sun upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon; not the sun and moon in the literal heavens.

Also notice the definition of "stand" in the marginal reading from the Hebrew, "be silent." It could not have been the literal sun and moon that were commanded to "be silent." The definition in the Hebrew Lexicon reads: "To be silent to anyone; to listen to him in silence; to wait in silence, patience and confidence for his help." These royal cities which worshiped the sun and the moon were

to take no part in the battle, therefore were commanded to stand still, be silent, to wait in silence, patience and confidence for Joshua's help.

His command, instead of being addressed to the literal sun and moon, was to the inhabitants of the *royal cities*, worshipers of the sun and moon, not to join in the conflict, but to wait in silence, patience and confidence for deliverance. That Joshua's command was to the royal cities is made plain in chapter 11:13, "As for the cities that stood still in their strength, Israel burned none of them."

In II Kings 23:11 is an example of the way the word "sun" is used. During the reign of the righteous king, Josiah, when he was cleansing the land of the idolatrous worship "he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun . . . and burned the chariots of the sun with fire."

Musings of the Editor

We often sing,

"When nature sinks, and spirits droop,
Thy promises divine
Are pillars to support my hopes
And elevate my mind."

How often in this mortal vale "nature sinks." We are beset with physical infirmity, perhaps a weak heart, dimming eyesight, diseased lungs, or failing ears. When such afflictions descend upon us, nature surrenders to the inevitable. It sinks.

With the sinking of nature or the retarding of physical activity, "spirits droop." No reaction to physical affliction is more natural, or more spontaneous than the drooping of the spirits. However, for such reaction there is a remedy. The sinking of nature is inevitable, because we are mortal and subject to the ills of mortality. Furthermore, there are cases where medical aid is wholly inadequate to counteract this sinking. But for the drooping of the spirits, there is help, strong and substantial. It comes in the form of *pillars*, given of God, and mighty.

"When nature sinks, and spirits droop, . . . Thy promises divine . . . are pillars to support my hopes. . . ."

Pillars of promise! Promises of a future life which will know no sinking of nature, no physical infirmity, no weariness, no fatigue, no lapse of memory; but instead, life shall be robust, the constitution vigorous, the whole being energetic, vivacity and strength streaming from every pore of the being. Such is immortal life, promised and guaranteed in God's Word to all who diligently seek it.

Such a life in prospect forms pillars—girders of steel and bulwarks of granite—to support our hopes and sustain our spirits from deflection when nature sinks.

Nor is there any limit to the heights to which our spirits can rise when supported by divine promises. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day," the mind lifted, elevated above the pain and discomfort and misery of the present.

O weary Christian, heavy-laden, and downcast by the realities of mortality, gather up God's precious promises and build thee stately pillars for thy soul's repose.

Meditations On the Word

"If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matt. 17:20).

Without question, men and women who choose to follow the Master, undertake a vocation that demands more of their mental powers than any earthly enterprise. The way is strait, it is narrow; and its travelers are instilled with a sense of urgency. But, as if to counterbalance the difficulty, Jesus and all the sacred writers furnish help and instruction in such an inspiring manner that just to understand their beautiful and stirring utterances impels one to quicken his pace forward. Our text is truly one of these masterful expressions—a few words, but a volume of meaning.

We do not for a moment concede that Jesus had any reference here to the removal of literal mountains. Jesus understood human nature and therefore applied this term of "mountains" to man's weaknesses such as unbelief, despair, frustration, ignorance, lust, covetousness, and, in fact, every besetment of the carnal mind. They are mountains in the sense that they plague our lives; they stand in our way and hinder our spiritual growth. Mountains they are, formidable and defiant, but conquerable.

Now, it may seem to us that there are mountains which cannot be removed. Such obstacles as a physical handicap, the grief sustained in the loss of a loved one, or a haunted memory because of past sins, are real. There is no denying their existence. But in reality they are not mountains. It is our improper attitude toward them that hinders our progress and is the mountain.

Consider, as a case in point, a physical handicap. Today we cannot be healed miraculously, as, for instance, the man at the Gate Beautiful, or the man born blind. But such handicaps are not really the mountains, for we can learn to live with them. We can learn to bear our handicaps in a right spirit. Instead of chafing about that which cannot be helped, let him who has some such trial attack the mountain of self-pity or indolence and use whatever senses or faculties he has to the best advantage, and, without question, he will be able to live usefully and radiantly.

Worthy of mention in connection with physical handicaps is the unsurpassed example of Miss Helen Keller. Deaf and blind since the age of 19 months, the now 75-year-old woman finds life an "exciting business." Her enviable record of accomplishments in behalf of others puts to shame countless numbers of humanity who possess all their faculties. Many men and women with lesser afflictions can take courage and surmount their difficulties.

In our daily duties it is not uncommon to be faced with tasks which we have no desire whatsoever to perform. We may dislike them, and dread the thought of doing them, yet, as so often is the case, when we set our mind to get the task done, and go at it with a will, the dislike and dread disappear and the work soon gets done. Our mental reaction toward a difficulty determines whether we

shall succeed in mastering the problem we face, or fail.

In many respects the problems of our spiritual life may be treated in this manner. By direct attack a man of strong will and faith can conquer the mountains that confront him. Ignorance can be dispelled by diligent study; frustration or disappointment can be removed by a better understanding of God's will and a realization that all things work together for good to them that love God (Rom. 8:28). The principal necessity is faith, and with faith these things are possible.

The Apostle Paul enumerated some of the difficulties which he encountered constantly (II Cor. 11:23-33). To many of us any one of these hardships would prove to be a mountain, but Paul did not allow these things to hinder him in the good work which he was doing. Whether it was persecution, peril among false brethren, or the daily care of all the churches, he endured hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Though he knew that everywhere he went bonds and imprisonment awaited him, he was fearless.

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Paul asked, and after naming over such mountains as tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, he said, "In all these things we are more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:35-37). In the two following verses he relates his resolution or persuasion that nothing would separate him from the love of Christ. In other words, no mountain would stand between him and serving God. Even the "thorn in the flesh" about which he prayed thrice for its removal, he learned to endure, after receiving God's answer: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

The reason for Paul's triumph was in his deep faith and conviction. "I know whom I have believed," he wrote to Timothy, "and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12).

The Old Testament also records noteworthy examples of faith and the removal of "mountains." All Israel feared Goliath and thought it impossible to conquer him, but David slew him. In Babylon no one would dare to disobey the king's decree, but Daniel and his three companions, in times of crises, chose to serve God, refusing any homage to heathen gods. Not only were they delivered but were also promoted. Nehemiah's building the wall of Jerusalem is an unusual demonstration of removal of a mountain. The Jews needed a wall, they wanted a wall, but feared to go ahead. Nehemiah's faith and determination brought results.

The greatest faith of all ages is demonstrated in these last days, for it is by faith alone that the mountains of sin are overcome. Especially was that faith strongest in our founder, the Rev. L. T. Nichols, for he challenged the mountains of religious ignorance, superstition, and theological tradition. Conquering these, he disclosed the truth of God's Word, in both precept and example, to his people that they might gain faith and remove their mountains of sin.

Faith is the most essential element in the Christian's life and we should at all times strive to increase it. Though to us it may appear small as a grain of mustard seed, yet if we direct it properly, if we determine to remove our mountains of sin, whatever they may be, we shall certainly succeed.

Your Questions Answered



BIBLICAL PERSONAL CURRENT

Do you have a question? Personal replies will be sent to Biblical questions to any correspondent, and counsel will be offered on problems pertaining to the spiritual life. THE MEGIDDO MESSAGE will publish only the most helpful discussions for the benefit of other readers. No names shall be mentioned.

How can men and women be asleep in dust and be resurrected at Christ's return, as the Bible teaches, if, as many believe, the soul leaves the body at death and lives on?

They could not. If the soul can live and experience the pleasures of Paradise without the body, what need of a resurrection? An intelligent six-year-old child should be able to detect this inconsistency; yet millions of good church-going adults have repeated, "I believe in the resurrection of the body," while hoping and expecting to go to Heaven at death. The Bible teaching is that "the dead know not anything," that they wait in the grave, unconscious, until the Resurrection (Eccl. 9: 5; Job 14: 1-15; 17: 13).

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is of pagan origin, with no Scriptural support (Ezek. 18: 20; Eccl. 9: 10; I Thess. 4: 13). Life apart from an organized body is inconceivable. The Christian's hope is not of being freed from his body, but of having his mortal nature changed to immortality (Phil. 3: 20, 21; I Cor. 15: 53).

Is the resurrection possible if the body has been cremated?

The inhumed body is oxidized slowly; the cremated body rapidly; but the end result is the same—ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Not only so, but the living body is constantly changing as its cells are renewed, yet the personality is not altered; so that there is no such thing as an original body. If our names are "written in the Lamb's book of life," we need have no fears, regardless of the fate of our mortal remains, for the Creator of our bodies is able to re-create them, that we may "all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body" (II Cor. 5: 10).

Why do we observe Sunday instead of the seventh day, Saturday, when the Bible makes no mention of Sunday as God's holy day?

Saturday is no more the seventh day of the Bible week than Sunday is the first; and neither is holy time. Both days are of Roman origin, the one named for Saturn, the other for the Sun. Neither is mentioned in the Bible. The Jewish week, except where the Jews had accepted Gentile times and customs, was calculated in a very different way.

We observe Sunday as a day of rest and worship because the civil law so designates it. We are commanded to be subject to the laws of the land (Rom. 13: 1). Our observance of the day should be sincere and exemplary, for the growing laxness in this respect is deplorable and tends to undermine our national life.

If we lived in modern Israel, we should no doubt observe Saturday; or if in a Moslem country, Friday, according to local law.

If we don't keep God's true sabbath, aren't we breaking one of the commandments?

No; not a commandment of the Law of faith, which preceded, underlay, and superseded the Law of Moses. The idea that the Decalogue is a dead letter is a shock to

many people, just as it was to the Jews of Jesus' day. The law, said Paul, was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3: 24, 25), but when it was abolished (II Cor. 3: 7-13), we were freed from that schoolmaster. The distinction between "moral" and "ceremonial" law is artificial and man-made; the whole Mosaic Law stood and fell together.

The Patriarchs did not keep the sabbath; the first recorded instance is in Exodus 16: 22-30. It is interesting to note that Jesus never once said, "Remember the sabbath day." His commandments in every case are deeper and more comprehensive than the Ten, which were part of a civil code for Israel under Moses, and which ceased by limitation and fulfillment.

I am confused on the sixth chapter of Revelation. Two ministers recently have given opposite views. Please give a Bible solution.

Human speculations are always opposite to the thoughts of God (Isaiah 55: 8), and usually conflict among themselves. The Book of Revelation is composed in an exalted, highly symbolic style, and no chapter is more so than the sixth. The sealed book is introduced in ch. 5, and contains the Divine judgments to be poured out on a wicked world when the King returns to claim His throne. The unsealing is future, for *no man* was able to open the book; only the Lion of the tribe of Juda has that power.

Note that the first horse in the vision is white. "Horse" represents "power," and "white," "purity." Christ proclaims a righteous law and calls upon all nations to submit. They, for the most part, refuse and rebel, and in consequence a second seal is opened, and a red horse, representing war, goes forth. As we read in Psalm 2: 2, 3 and Rev. 19: 19, they go forth to make war with Christ, but He, as we see in ch. 6: 2, has a crown given Him and goes forth "conquering and to conquer." Chapter 17: 14 also describes this war. While they war against Christ in wickedness, He wars against them in righteousness, to destroy or take away their *false* peace and bring true "peace on earth; good will toward men."

The subsequent "seals" further elaborate the theme. The rider on the black horse metes out justice and judgment, while Death and the grave claim those who resist the Kingdom of God (Zech. 13: 8).

Verses 9-11 introduce the faithful saints who have been rewarded with immortality and authority, who enter a "rest" of a thousand years (ch. 20: 1-4). Will it not be a wonderful rest when all war and strife shall cease, and no wickedness is allowed? The "fellow-servants" of v. 11 are the subjects of the Kingdom, who work out their salvation during the thousand years. They are "killed" or die to sin (Rom. 6: 10) as did the rulers, but under much more favorable circumstances.

On the Day of Pentecost did the Apostles talk in unknown tongues, or did they simply speak every one in his own language?

It is evident that this was a clear case of miraculous power, for we are informed in Acts 2: 7 that the speakers were all Galileans, unlearned men who would normally understand but one, or at most two languages. Only through the power of the Holy Spirit, as recorded in this chapter, could they have told the good news in language intelligible to the Jews of the Dispersion, seventeen nationalities of whom are listed as witnesses of this miracle.

THE CITY OF GOD

There's coming a City from heaven,
The beautiful City of God;
Where sin cannot scatter its leaven,
But all shall acknowledge His Rod.
The City—its equal has never
Been seen in the ages now past;
Whose grandeur and beauty shall ever
Throughout an eternity last.

There's coming a City from heaven.
O glorious day of the Lord!
To all has the promise been given
Who serve Him with single accord.
Its officers quickly shall banish
All strife in that sov'reign domain.
The weapons of warfare shall vanish,
For nothing that harms can remain.

There's coming a City of glory,
Whose wonders have never been told.
God's Prophets began the sweet story;
The Apostles then helped to unfold
The tale of the ages, as Jesus
And angels the story revealed;
Still only a glimpse has been given—
The rest of its glories are sealed.

That City one day will be planted
Securely on Zion's fair shore;
There Jesus shall reign in His splendor,
And Him shall all nations adore.
The lowly and meek shall inherit
The land that "afar off" was seen.
The faithful shall enter and share it,
But none who are vile and unclean.

We look for a City from heaven,
Whose Builder and Maker is God;
And long for its joys to be given
To those who the narrow way trod.
And lo! it will soon be descending—
Not long have His children to wait
Till Christ, with His angels attending,
Is seen, as He stands at the gate.

O glorious City—one hundred
And forty-four thousand, and One,
The faithful, who rise to meet Jesus,
And hear His glad plaudit, "Well done!"
With them then descending to Zion,
Endued with the grand Spirit birth—
We thus see the City established.
New Jerusalem—welcome to earth!

—L. L. S.